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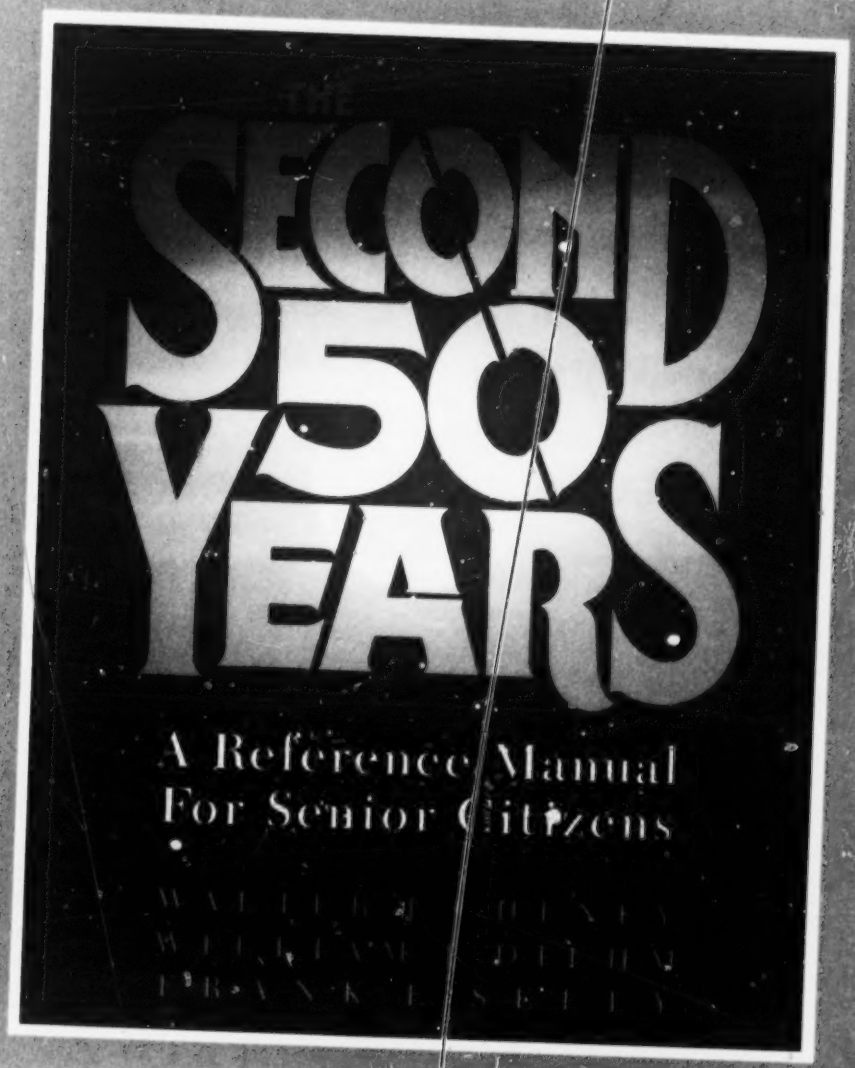

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'Scarlett' TV Rights Go For Record $10 Million

Setting a record that has astonished the film and publishing industries, *Scarlett*, the sequel to *Gone With the Wind*, has been bought by CBS and a consortium of American and European investors for just under $10 million. Elsewhere the figure was given as $8 million—still enough to startle. The deal covers American television rights and TV and film rights abroad.

The fact that the novel by Alexandra Ripley, for which Warner Books paid close to $5 million, has received generally negative reviews has not prevented it from becoming an instant international No. 1 fiction bestseller. Nor, obviously, did it discourage the many contenders for the dramatic rights just sold by the William Morris Agency, which represents the estate of *Gone With the Wind* author Margaret Mitchell.

CBS's partners in the enterprise are Silvio Berlusconi, a major shareholder in the Italian publishing house Mondadori, who also has broadcasting and newspaper interests; a German communications conglomerate, the Kirch Group; and Robert Halmi, chairman of RHI Entertainment, Inc., and producer of the top-rated CBS miniseries *Lonesome Dove*, from the Larry McMurtry novel. Rizzoli, incidentally, is the publisher of *Scarlett* in Italy.

Ripley, who will not write the eight-hour-minimum miniseries, is to receive a percentage of the proceeds under the contract just signed, as of all income generated by her sequel.

William Morris executives closely involved in strategy and/or negotiations leading from commissioning of the book to the sale of dramatic rights included Irene Webb, vice-president of the motion picture and literary departments; Robert Gottlieb, head of the New York literary department; Owen Laster, worldwide head of publishing; Allan Kanof, head of the New York office; Marcie Posner, head of international rights; Roger Davis, executive vice-president, and Jerry Katzman, head of the entire agency.

Orchestrating the simultaneous worldwide publication of *Scarlett* was part of a plan to put the novel on the map as a global event and stimulate just such an international entrepreneurial response as has led to the present film agreement.

The purchasers will hold their rights in perpetuity and may exhibit the miniseries as a feature film abroad, though not here. They also have videocassette and video disk rights in perpetuity.

Not covered in their contract are audio rights, for which another record price has just been paid by Simon & Schuster: $150,000. An abridged audio version of *Scarlett* will be on the market for this Christmas.

Airing of the miniseries is scheduled for 1993. Warner, which probably will have published the novel in softcover in 1992, may then be expected to issue a tie-in paperback edition.

Casting the original *Gone With the Wind* film became a national preoccupation in the late 1930s, and casting the sequel promises to keep publicity drums beating over an even wider area. Halmi says an unknown will be sought to play Scarlett opposite an established actor as Rhett Butler.

Prior to the present deal, the highest price paid for screen rights was around $2.5 million for *Thy Neighbor's Wife* by Gay Talese, never filmed.

—PAUL NATHAN

AAP Sales Report for Septemeber

Category	% change, September*	% change, YTD
Adult hardcover	16.3	8.2
Adult paperback	25.6	6.5
Juvenile hardcover	18.9	6.3
Juvenile paperback	33.6	15.4
Univ. pr. hardcover	11.8	3.2
Univ. pr. paperback	8.4	13.7
Bibles, etc.	38.0	27.2
Mass market paperback	3.8	4.3
Book club	-4.5	5.1
Mail order	13.4	4.0
Sci-tech	6.6	1.4
College texts	4.6	-1.3
School texts	-2.6	3.6

**Percent changes measured against same time periods, 1990.*

Out of Line

by Mort Gerberg

grown to such an extent that they now constitute a commercial, high-sales-volume end of the small-press distribution industry.

"Many more publishers than ever before can now have access to the trade, with much greater success than 10 years ago," says Eric Kampmann, formerly of Kampmann & Company Inc., who now handles sales for the Maryland-based marketing-distribution firm National Book Network. "There has certainly been a proliferation of strong, independent publishers, which is the reason I survived the debacle of several years ago. People need our services."

In the wake of the "debacle"—a failure of an early Kampmann sales-distribution venture that entailed bankruptcy courts, seized assets, and left several small presses extremely embittered—Kampmann joined with Jed Lyons, who heads the distribution end, in NBN. The firm offers exclusive representation for some 50 well-established independent publishers, from Confluence Press and Harvard Common Press to Mustang Publishing and Urban Institute Press.

Also at the high-volume end, Publishers Group West, in Emeryville, Calif., now handles more than 150 active publishers. In 1987, PGW received more than $16 million in net sales after returns. This year, it anticipates some $43 million, according to Gary Todoroff, v-p and director of sales. What accounts for the growth? "There's a fairly significant disenfranchisement from New York publishing," he says. "In some cases, New York publishers have an insensitivity to what's going on. They don't know what booksellers need or want or what the consumers want. We're meeting the need."

Established in 1976, PGW has 100 staffers and 18 sales reps, and expects within the next 16 months to complete a conversion to all house reps. "We're trying to provide the same sales dynamic that any major publisher can," says Todoroff. "We're not there yet, but we're close."

Thus, some of the major choices, however limited, for small, independent publishers. Are they meeting the publishers' needs? Publishers' off-the-record complaints about distributors—and vice versa—abound. Without question, however, a tier system of distributors is in place, however small and shaky, and publishers are always there to climb it.

Options, Not Solutions

Consider Cane Hill, a small literary press in New York that just signed on with its first distributor. Publisher Steve Schrader, whose small list (he publishes two or three titles yearly) has generated excellent reviews, relied until recently on orders from wholesalers to reach the trade.

"I used to get orders from 30 or 40 stores," says Schrader, who has now joined InBook. "I had no access to salesmen. Now, with InBook, I have 18 salesmen and I'm in a couple of hundred stores I wouldn't have gotten into otherwise. I don't know how else someone in my position—with one or two people—can sell to the trade."

Then consider Thunder's Mouth Press, which began as a literary press 10 years ago. In the early years, when he was bringing out few titles, publisher Neil Ortenberg turned to Persea Books for distribution. Then, with an expanding list, he joined Consortium, where he continued to grow, and remained there for three years, until last January.

Today, Ortenberg's press is a small trade house doing primarily nonfiction titles and is represented by Publishers Group West. PGW, he notes, has already "met, if not exceeded" his expectations, advancing, for example, 35,000 copies of his just-shipped nonfiction book *Plausible Denial* by Mark Lane, a look at the JFK assassination.

Although highly critical of Consortium's sales performance, Ortenberg recognizes that his publishing program—and therefore his distribution needs—changed sharply while with the St. Paul company. "Consortium is good mainly for nonprofit literary publishers—they take small or neophyte operations and bring them a couple of rungs up—but not adequate in terms of advancing sales if you want to be a more commercial trade publisher," he says. "PGW, on the other hand, is a much more muscular, aggressive and sophisticated company."

Ortenberg, for one, is not optimistic that other small publishers, hoping to grow like Thunder's Mouth, will find strong distributors waiting to meet their expanded needs. "Publishers are growing more and more sophisticated but their distribution options are not increasing," he says.

"I don't believe there's a solution," he adds. "In literary publishing, more federal and foundation funding—like the new Lila Wallace and Mellon programs—will have an impact but won't change anything. What's needed are new entrepreneurial people. But if you're an entrepreneur, why get into literary book distribution? You can make money at it—but it's very tough."□

How Booksellers Deal with Small Presses

Which three wholesalers do you most often use for your small press purchases?

Ingram	60.6%
Baker & Taylor	39.1
Bookpeople	24.2
Inland	14.9
Gordon's	13.0
Pacific Pipeline	10.2
NACSCORP	5.9
Koen	5.6
PGW	5.3
Spring Arbor	4.3
Bookslinger	4.0
New Leaf	4.0
Golden-Lee	3.7
the distributors	3.1
Bookman	2.8
Consortium	2.8
L-S Distributors	2.2
Partners	1.9
Southern Books	1.9
Bookazine	1.6

In August, 1000 randomly selected bookstores were sent a questionnaire by Cahners Research; over 400 responded to 20 questions intended to establish the size of market for small press books. Among the highlights: 90% carry small press books, with the average store carrying 1350 titles; sales of such titles averaged $25,000 per bookstore in 1990, about 2% of total sales; 80% indicated they did not want small presses to do more in hardcover; about half of all small press purchases are made directly from the publisher, although insufficient discounts were cited as the most troublesome aspect of dealing with the smaller houses. And finally, the figures at left indicate that, of the preferred suppliers, Ingram is dominant, though one should recall that national wholesalers may in turn fulfill requests through sales groups, such as Consortium, PGW, etc. (For a copy of the survey, call Cathy Hoey at 212-463-6787.)

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